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FORGOTTEN REALMS

HOMELAND



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THE LEGEND OF DRIZZT BOOK I

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Welcome to the world of **THE DROW** – the race of Dark Elves that live deep beneath the surface of the planet, in the cavernous city Menzoberranzan.

In this ruthless society, nothing is more highly sought than station. The Ruling Council is comprised of the Nine Great Houses; every house beneath those constantly plots to murder and betray their way into the elite. Ambition overrides everything. The most powerful individuals in the Drow social order are the **MATRON MOTHERS**, each House's leader. Males are considered inferior, fit only to serve.

In Menzoberranzan, there are no heroes, none who seek justice. Until this night...

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Never does a star grace this land
with a poet's light of twinkling
mysteries, nor does the sun send to
here its rays of warmth and life.

*This is the
Underdark...*

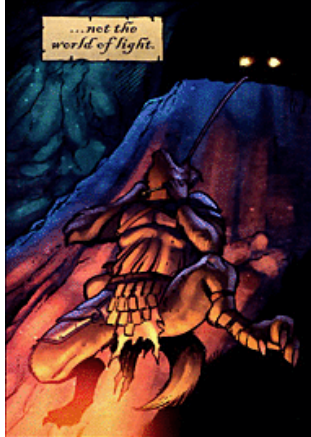
...the secret world beneath
the bustling surface of the
Forgotten Realms, whose
sky is a ceiling of
heartless stone...



...and whose walls show
the gray blandness of death
in the torchlight of the
foulish surface-dwellers
that stumble here.



*This is not
their land...*



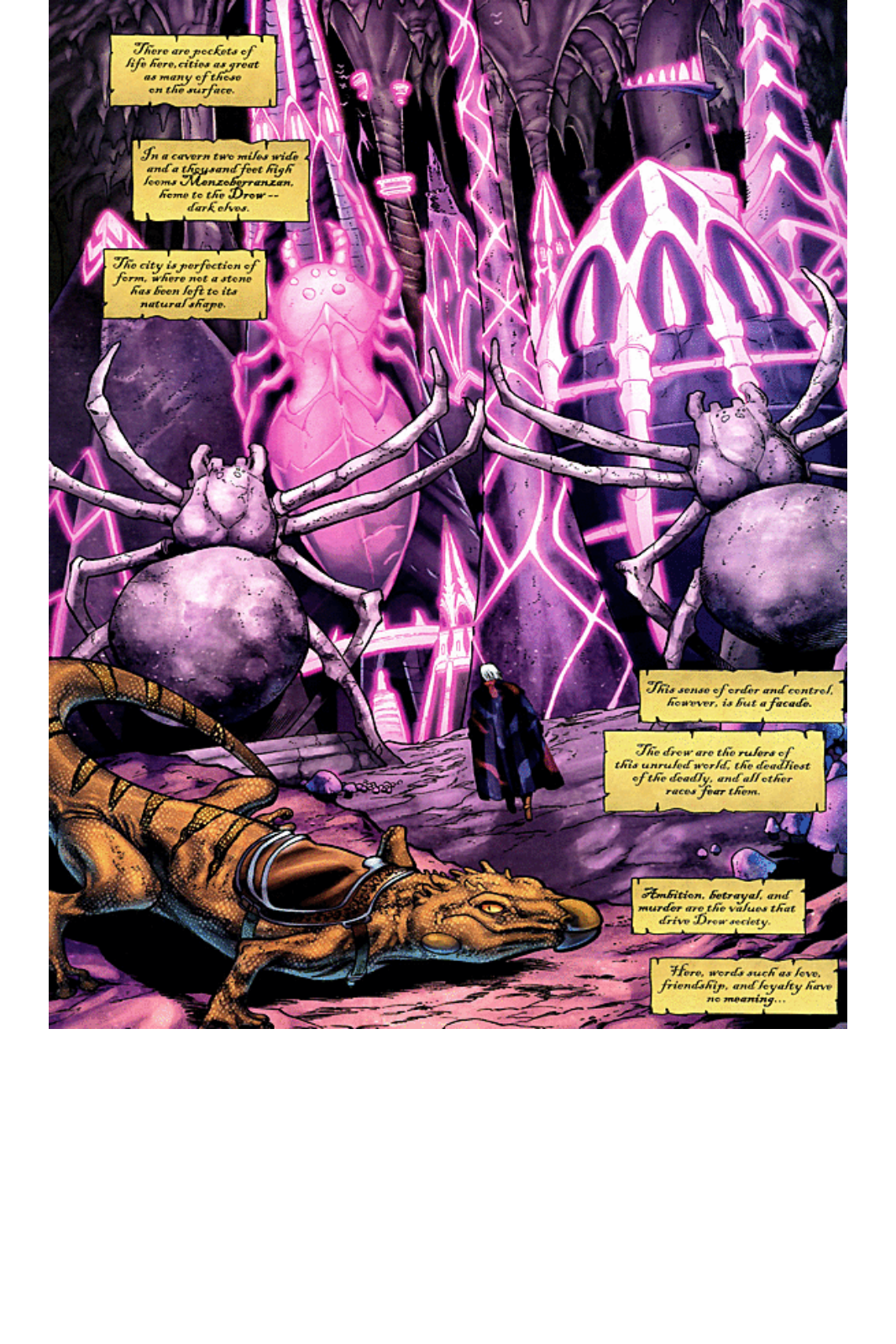
...not the
world of light.



*Most who come
here uninvited
do not return.*



*This is the
Underdark.*



There are pockets of life here, cities as great as many of those on the surface.

In a cavern two miles wide and a thousand feet high looms Menzoberranzan, home to the Drow-- dark elves.

The city is perfection of form, where not a stone has been left to its natural shape.

This sense of order and control, however, is but a facade.

The drow are the rulers of this unruly world, the deadliest of the deadly, and all other races fear them.

Ambition, betrayal, and murder are the values that drive Drow society.

Here, words such as love, friendship, and loyalty have no meaning...



... here, even those born of royal blood are prone to treachery.



STUDENT
OR MASTER?



ONLY
A MASTER MAY
WALK OUT-OF-HOUSE
HERE AT THE
ACADEMY.



GREETINGS,
FACELESS
ONE.

SECONDBOY
DO'URDEN, HAVE
YOU MY
PAYMENTS?



YOU WILL BE
COMPENSATED.

OR DO
YOU DOUBT THE
WORD OF MALICE
DO'URDENT?

MY
APOLOGIES,
DININ.

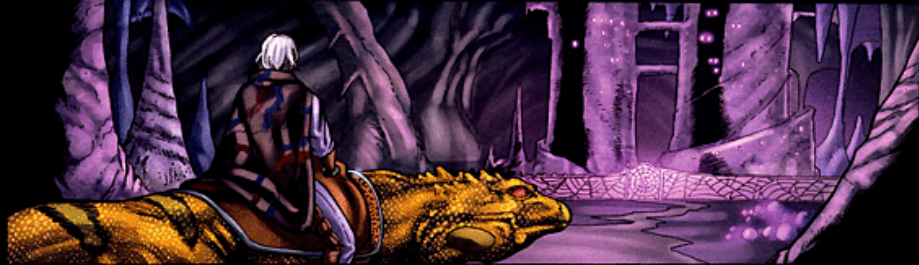


YOU WILL
GET YOUR REWARD
WHEN ALTON DEVIR
IS DEAD.

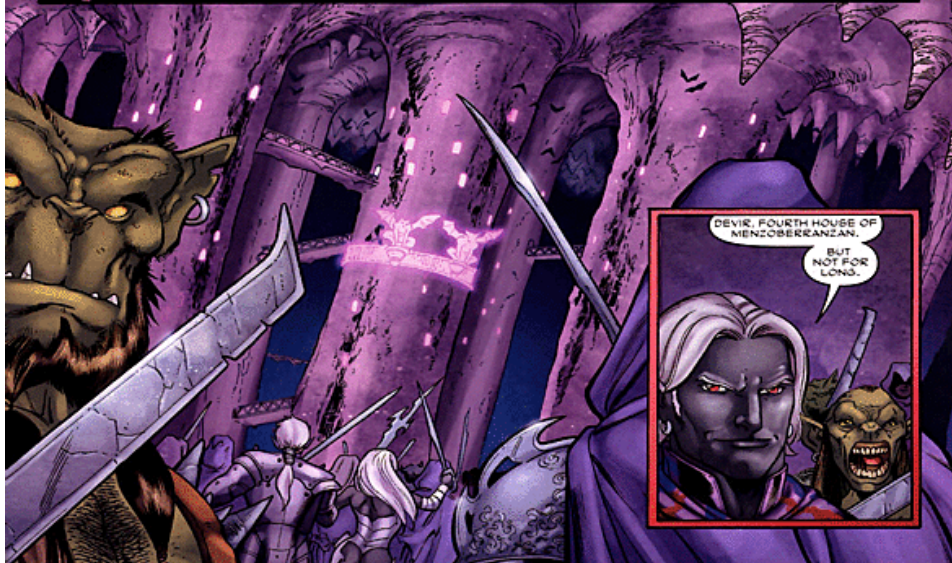
OF
COURSE. SHOULD
MY DOOMED PUPIL
KNOW OF HIS HOUSE'S
FATE BEFORE HE
DIES?



AS THE KILLING
BLOW FALLS, LET
ALTON DEVIR LEARN
HIS FAMILY DIES
WITH HIM.







HOUSE DEVIL.

SPECIFICALLY THE CHAPEL
WHERE MATRON GINAFEE
HER DAUGHTERS AND CLERICS
Huddle in PRAYER--

--PRAYERS
THAT WILL GO
UNANSWERED.

M-MALICE...?
NO!

WE ARE
UNDER
ATTACK!





HOUSE DEVIR...

SUCH
POWERFUL
MAGIC...

MATRON
GINAPAS OF HOUSE
DEVIR, I PRESUME.

SHIT

SHRISSH





LISTEN!



HOUSE DO'URDEN.

DRIZZT,

THE
CHILD'S
NAME IS
DRIZZT.

QUEEN OF
SPIDERS.
TAKE THIS
BABE.

DRIZZT
DO'URDEN,
WE OFFER YOU
IN PAYMENT FOR
OUR GLORIOUS
VIC—

WAIT!

MAYAT?

DO YOU
NOT SENSE
IT?
NALFEIN IS
DEAD! THE BABY
IS NO LONGER THE
THIRD LIVING
EON!

WE PROMISED
THE SPIDER QUEEN
A SON OF HOUSE
DO'URDEN, AND
IT HAS BEEN
GIVEN.

BUT NOT IN
SACRIFICE!

STAY YOUR
HAND, BRIZA.

LOLTH IS
CONTENT. OUR
VICTORY IS
WON.

WELCOME,
THEN, YOUR
BROTHER.

LOOK AT HIS EYES...
THEY'RE PURPLE.
SUCH AN ODD
COLOR.

—HEMPH—
IT'S JUST
A MALE,
VIENNA.

HE'D HAVE
BEEN BETTER
OFF DEAD.



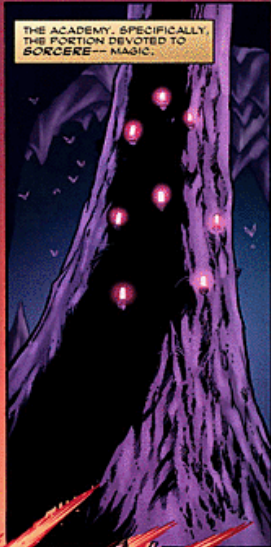
WOULD THAT I HAD THE COURAGE TO DEPART, OR TO STAND OPENLY AGAINST THE WRONGNESS OF MY PEOPLE.

BUT I AM ALONE HERE, A DROW IN NAME ONLY— THERE IS NO ONE ELSE LIKE ME.



LET THEM DISCOVER WHAT I REALLY AM.

THE ACADEMY, SPECIFICALLY,
THE PORTION DEVOTED TO
SOKCERE-- MAGIC.







For five long years, Viorna devoted almost every waking moment to the care of her young brother Drizzet.

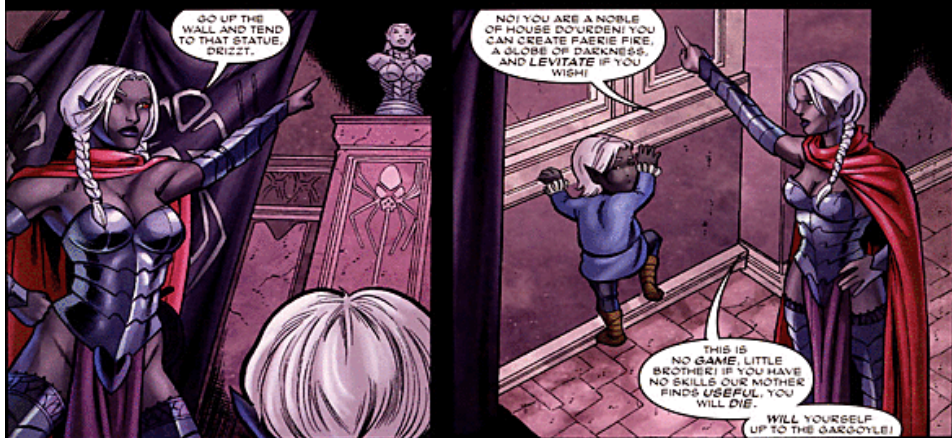
Though in drow society, this was not a time of nurturing, but of indoctrination.



GO UP THE WALL AND TEND TO THAT STATUE, DRIZZET.

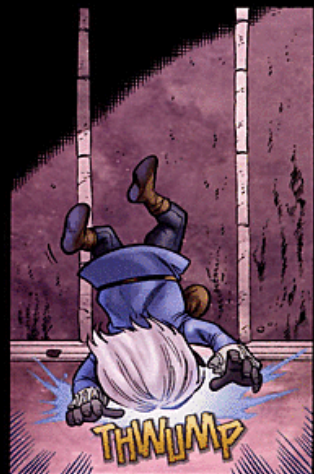


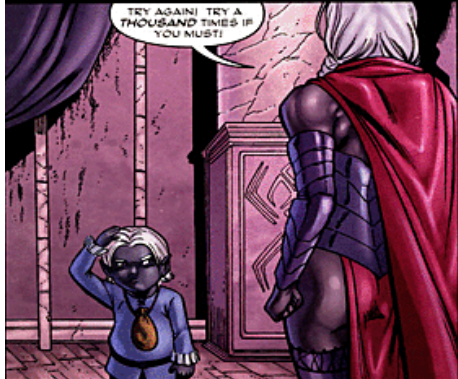
NO! YOU ARE A NOBLE OF HOUSE DO'URDEN! YOU CAN CREATE FAERIE FIRE, A GLOBE OF DARKNESS, AND LEVITATE IF YOU WISH!



THIS IS NO GAME, LITTLE BROTHER! IF YOU HAVE NO SKILLS OUR MOTHER FINDS USEFUL, YOU WILL DIE.

WILL YOURSELF UP TO THE GARGOYLE!





TRY AGAIN! TRY A THOUSAND TIMES IF YOU MUST!



HE IS YOUNG FOR THAT.

PERHAPS, BUT I'LL NOT KNOW UNTIL I LET HIM TRY, BRIZA.



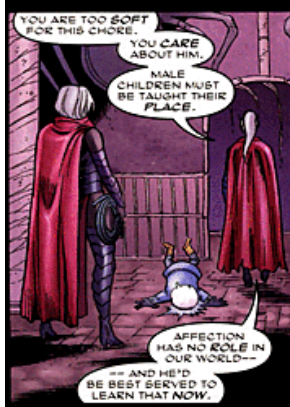
WHIP HIM WHEN HE FAILS. HE NEEDS INSPIRATION.

DRIZET IS MINE TO REAR, AND I NEED NO HELP FROM YOU!



YOU SHOULD WATCH HOW YOU SPEAK TO A HIGH PRIESTESS.

AS MATEON MALICE WILL WATCH HOW YOU INTERFERE WITH THE TASK SHE ASSIGNED ME.



YOU ARE TOO SOFT FOR THIS CHORE.

YOU CARE ABOUT HIM.

MALE CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT THEIR PLACE.

AFFECTION HAS NO ROLE IN OUR WORLD--
--AND HE'D BE BEST SERVED TO LEARN THAT NOW.



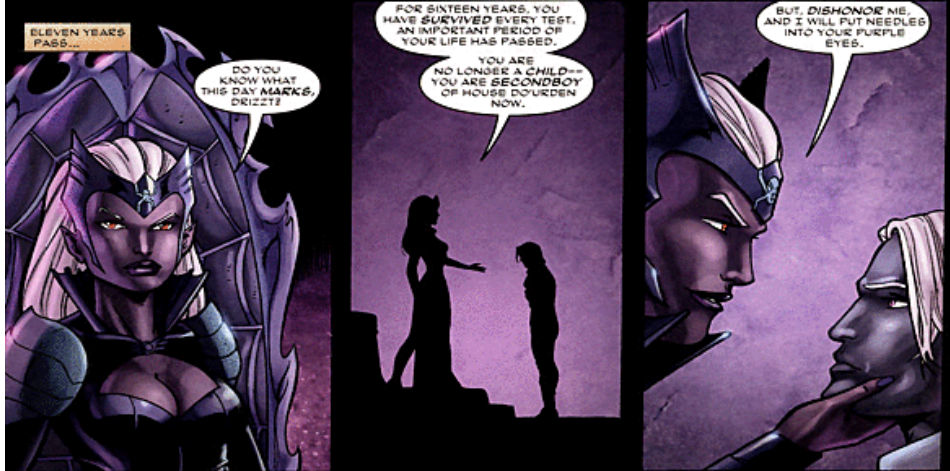
ENOUGH!

I WILL DO IT, VIERNA--



AAGH!

The next day, Drizet levitated the full twenty feet in his first attempt.



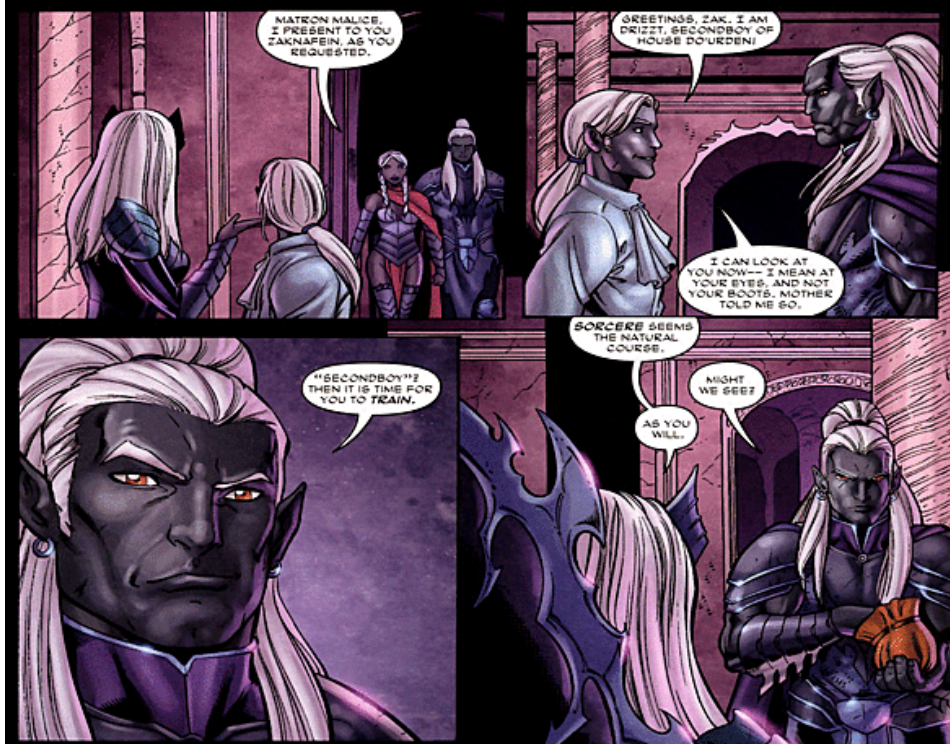
ELEVEN YEARS
PASS...

DO YOU
KNOW WHAT
THIS DAY MARKS,
DRIZZ?

FOR SIXTEEN YEARS, YOU
HAVE SURVIVED EVERY TEST,
AN IMPORTANT PERIOD OF
YOUR LIFE HAS PASSED.

YOU ARE
NO LONGER A CHILD—
YOU ARE **SECONDBOY**
OF HOUSE D'OURDEN
NOW.

BUT, **DISHONOR** ME,
AND I WILL PUT NEEDLES
INTO YOUR PURPLE
EYES.



MATRON MALICE,
I PRESENT TO YOU
ZAKNAFEIN, AS YOU
REQUESTED.

GREETINGS, ZAK. I AM
DRIZZ, **SECONDBOY** OF
HOUSE D'OURDEN!

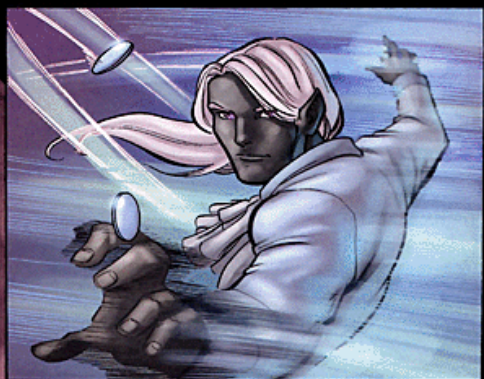
I CAN LOOK AT
YOU NOW—I MEAN AT
YOUR EYES, AND NOT
YOUR BOOTS. MY OTHER
TOLD ME SO.

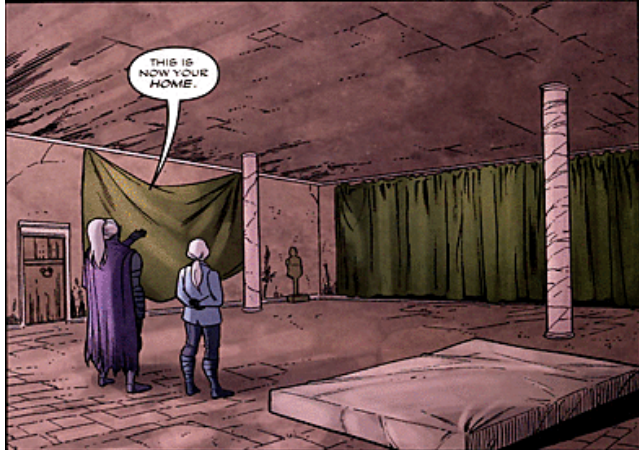
"**SECONDBOY**"? THEN IT IS TIME FOR
YOU TO TRAIN.

SORCERE SEEMS
THE NATURAL
COURSE.

AS YOU
WILL..

MIGHT
WE SEE?





TAKE YOUR TIME AND EXAMINE THEM. LEARN WHICH ONES SIT *BEST* IN YOUR HANDS.

BY THE TIME WE HAVE FINISHED, YOU WILL KNOW EVERY ONE OF THEM AS A TRUSTED COMPANION.

ARE THEY ALL LIKE THAT?

DO ALL DROW CHILDREN POSSESS SUCH INNOCENCE, SUCH SIMPLE, UNTAINTED SAILES, BEFORE GROWING INTO THIEVES AND MURDERERS?

OR ARE YOU UNIQUE, DRIZZT?

AND IF YOU ARE SO DIFFERENT, WHAT THEN, IS THE CAUSE? THE BLOOD COURSEING THROUGH YOUR VEINS?

THE CHILDREN...

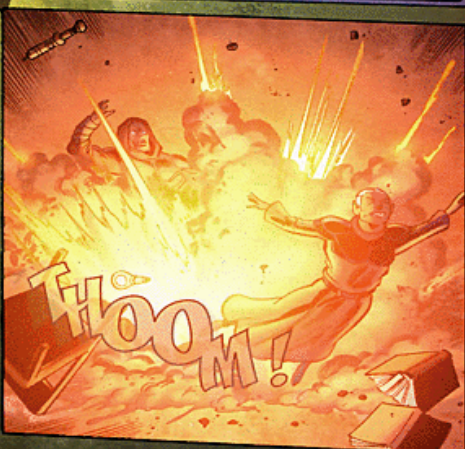
NO!

HE IS DIFFERENT... I CAN'T LET HIM BECOME LIKE THE OTHERS!

HE IS DIFFERENT...





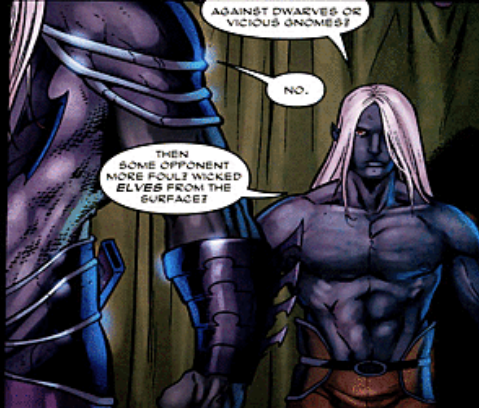






THEY NEVER...

...YOU HAD ANOTHER BROTHER-- NALFEIN. HE WAS KILLED IN BATTLE THE NIGHT YOU WERE BORN.



AGAINST DWARVES OR VICIOUS GNOME?

NO.

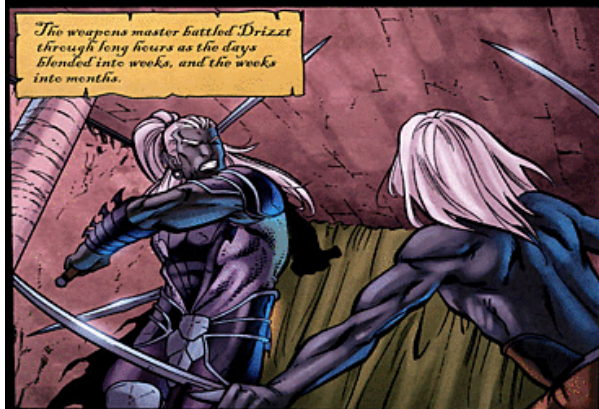
THEN SOME OPPONENT MORE FOULY WICKED ELVES FROM THE SURFACE?



HE DIED AT THE HANDS OF A DROW!



NOW, AGAIN!



The weapons master battled Drizzt through long hours as the days blended into weeks, and the weeks into months.



Until three years had passed in the blink of an eye.

MY GREETINGS, MATRON. TO WHAT DO I OWE THE HONOR OF YOUR PRESENCE?

YOU AND MY SON SPEND SO MUCH TIME IN HERE. I CAME TO WITNESS THE RESULTS.

HE IS A FINE FIGHTER.

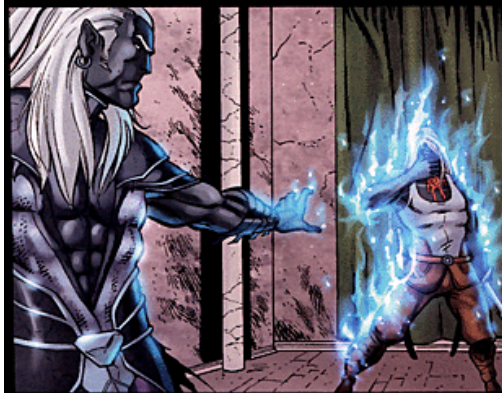
HE WILL HAVE TO BE.

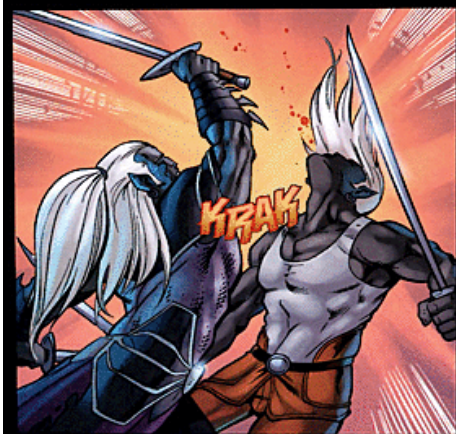
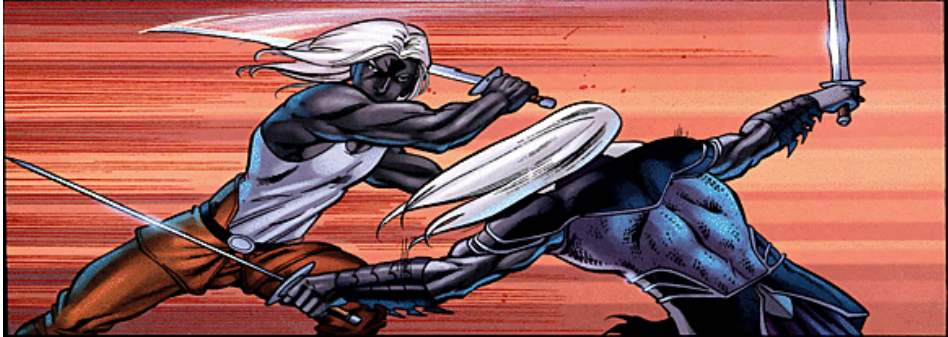
I DO NOT DOUBT YOUR PROWESS WITH THE BLADE, YOU HAVE THE PROPER BLOOD.

BUT THERE ARE OTHER QUALITIES THAT MAKE UP A DEGW WARRIOR.

QUALITIES OF THE HEART THAT ONE SUCH AS ZAKNAFEIN MAY NOT...

SHOW HER, YOUNG WARRIOR!



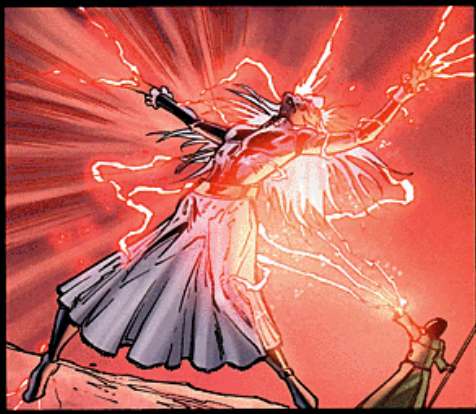








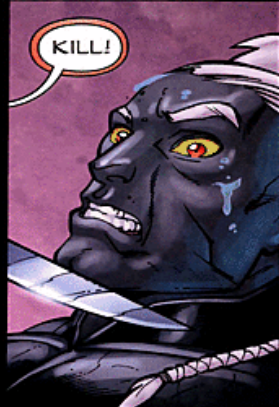


















OR HAVE YOU EVER
HEARD THE SCREAMS
OF DYING CHILDREN?



HOW LOUD,
THOSE SCREAMS!

THEY ECHO
OVER THE CENTURIES
IN YOUR MIND; THEY CHASE
YOU DOWN THE PATHS OF
YOUR ENTIRE LIFE!

ZAK, WHY DO YOU
SAY THESE THINGS?

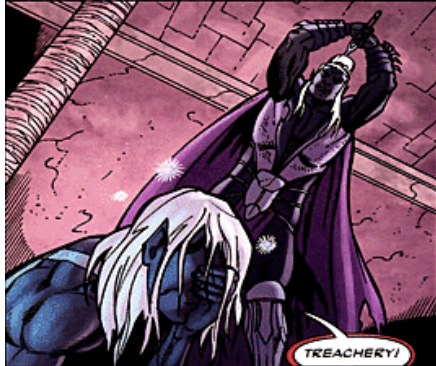


DROW WARRIOR!
DO NOT BE SO QUICK TO
CLAIM A TITLE YOU CANNOT
BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND!



I HAVE
YOU!





TREACHERY!

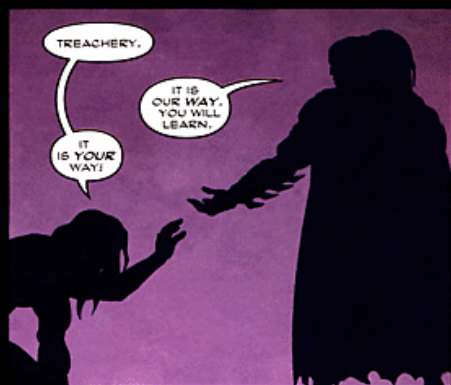


DO YOU
SO HATE TO
LOSE?!



DO YOU NOT
UNDERSTAND?
TO LOSE IS TO
DIE!

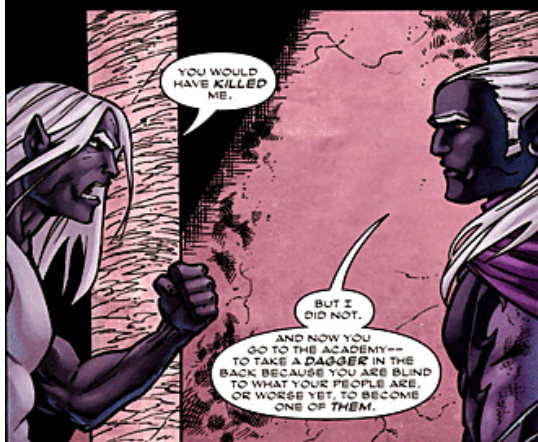
YOU MAY
WIN A THOUSAND
FIGHTS, BUT YOU CAN
ONLY LOSE ONE!



TREACHERY.

IT IS
OUR WAY.
YOU WILL
LEARN.

IT
IS YOUR
WAY!



YOU WOULD
HAVE KILLED
ME.

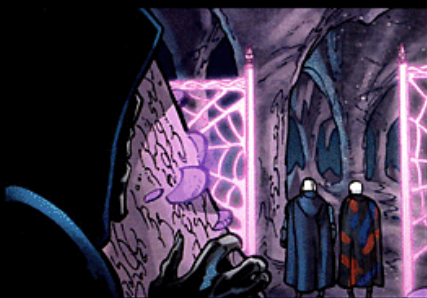
BUT I
DID NOT.

AND NOW YOU
GO TO THE ACADEMY--
TO TAKE A DAGGER IN THE
BACK BECAUSE YOU ARE BLIND
TO WHAT YOUR PEOPLE ARE,
OR WORSE YET, TO BECOME
ONE OF THEM.



GO, THEN,
DRIZZT DO'URDEN.

GO AND
LEARN WHO YOU
REALLY ARE.



NEXT: THE ACADEMY

NEXT ISSUE



INTO THE DARKNESS

COMING IN JULY FROM DDP

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An outcast by birth
to walk a path of
surface lies the Ur
beings and hideous
by his family at





THE FORGOTTEN REALMS

THE SHATTERED LANDS

h and nature, the dark elf known as Drizzt is destined
f tragedy and adventure. Deep beneath the Earth's
nderdark - a realm populated by all manner of strange
s creatures - and ruled over by the the Drow. Scorned
d even his race, the young Drizzt finds an unlikely
ally in the Swordmaster Zaknafein.

tekScan 142